



**November 2006**  
**FLSA: NON-EXEMPT**

## **COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER**

### **DEFINITION**

Under general supervision, receives 911 police, fire and medical emergency calls, and dispatches police, fire, and medical personnel following prescribed procedures; answers non-emergency calls for public safety and other City departments; performs a variety of non-sworn office duties in support of law enforcement activities; and performs related work as required.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel. May exercise technical and functional direction over assigned staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This is the entry-level in the communications dispatch series that performs dispatch, law enforcement and police support duties that do not require performance by a sworn police officer. Responsibilities are centered on extensive contact with the public over the telephone, in both emergency and non-emergency situations to receive, transmit and provide factual information, forms and reports. All activities must be performed within specified legal guidelines. This class is distinguished from other technical office support classes in that the work requires knowledge of codes, law enforcement, and dispatching policies and procedures in addition to standard office support skills. This class is further distinguished from Senior Communications Dispatcher in that the latter is responsible for technical and functional direction over lower-level staff and is capable of performing the most complex duties assigned to the division.

### **EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS** (Illustrative Only)

*Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.*

- Receives and evaluates 911 police, fire and medical emergency calls, and related business calls for the City during an assigned portion of the 24-hours-per-day/7-days-per-week Police Department operations; provides information and/or transfers calls to the appropriate department, agency or response organization; takes messages for Police Department personnel.
- Dispatches public safety emergency units in accordance with established procedures and policies using a computerized dispatch system, including determining priority of emergency and sending appropriate response unit, including police, fire, emergency medical personnel, towing services, utilities.
- Provides emergency medical instructions to callers, including CPR, childbirth and other medical instructions according to standardized Emergency Medical Dispatch Pre-Arrival Instruction established through the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch.
- Maintains contact with all field units, including accounting for location and status of all units and maintaining records of all field calls.

- Operates a computer, telephone, and radio console and telecommunication equipment simultaneously while performing dispatching activities.
- Enters into, updates, and retrieves a variety of records from CLETS database, including stolen vehicles and other property, vehicle registration information, guns and property, and warranted or missing persons.
- Runs warrant checks on subjects, registration, checks on vehicles and property, and relays information and instructions to personnel in the field.
- Contacts public and private agencies and requests mutual assistance, including other law enforcement agencies, area fire departments, hospitals, towing services, and utilities.
- Logs call data in a written or automated format; monitors calls after initial dispatch to provide additional coordination, support or information.
- Accesses Federal, State and local law enforcement information databases to obtain information regarding outstanding warrants, criminal history, records information and vehicle data, relays such information to sworn staff.
- Acts as a liaison with the public and representatives of other agencies for the department; provides initial non-emergency contact with the public and representatives of other agencies for the requesting of police records or for fire or related services; determines the nature of the contact; provides factual information regarding services, policies and procedures, which requires a knowledge of legal guidelines, departmental policies and procedures and the use of tact and discretion, or directs the caller to the proper individual or agency.
- Maintains accurate departmental and law enforcement records and files; researches and compiles information from such files.
- Attends necessary fire and police training, shift briefing sessions, participates in drills and test scenarios to prepare for unexpected emergencies, and rides along with police officers and fire personnel.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Basic functions, principles and practices of law enforcement agencies.
- Terminology and procedures used in public safety dispatching.
- Operation of computer-aided communications equipment, including multiple telephone lines and radio systems.
- Applicable codes, regulations, policies, technical processes and procedures, including penal, vehicle, and health and safety codes and regulations.
- City and County geography, maps, streets, landmarks, and driving directions.
- Principles and practices of data collection and report preparation.
- Business arithmetic and basic statistical techniques.
- Basic principles of record keeping.
- Modern office practices, methods and computer equipment.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for dealing with and solving the problems presented by a variety of individuals from various socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, in person and over the telephone.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to the public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

### **Ability to:**

- Assess and prioritize emergency situations while remaining calm and using sound, independent judgment.

- Memorize codes, names, street locations and other information.
- Read and interpret maps and other pertinent documentation.
- Interpret, apply and explain policies, procedures and regulations.
- Attend to multiple activities simultaneously.
- Obtain necessary information from individuals in stressful or emergency situations.
- Compile and summarize information to prepare accurate, clear and concise reports.
- Perform technical, detailed and responsible office support work.
- Compose correspondence independently or from brief instructions.
- Maintain accurate records and files.
- Organize, maintain, and update office database and records systems.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy.
- Organize own work, set priorities and meet critical deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and software programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines in politically sensitive situations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

### **Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:*

Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade and one (1) year experience in operating radio, teletypewriter, or other communication equipment. Experience in dealing with the public is highly desirable.

### **License:**

- Valid California class C driver's license with satisfactory driving record may be required.
- Medical Priority Emergency Medical Dispatcher Certification.
- CPR Certification.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification that requires extended periods of time of sitting; standing in work areas and walking between work areas may also be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects necessary to perform job functions.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.